

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 091559Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8564
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TAPIEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS:PFOR, UR, CH, JA
SUBJECT: SOVIET RELATIONS WITH CHINA, JAPAN

1. SUMMARY. AN UNOFFICIAL SOVIET SINOLOGIST SAID THAT HE
CONSIDERED THE CHINESE RELEASE OF THE HELICOPTER CREW
"SIGNIFICANT" AND "A VERY SMART MOVE BY THE CHINESE," BUT
HE THOUGHT WASHINGTON WAS THE MAIN TARGET OF THE GESTURE.
HE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT SURE WHAT SORT OF RESPONSE MOSCOW
COULD OFFER. HE IMPLIED THAT IL'ICHEV MAY RETURN TO
PEKING BUT HE RULED OUT ANY SOVIET CONCESSION IN THE
BORDER TALKS. ON GROMYKO'S VISIT TO JAPAN, HE SAID THAT
THE MAIN POINTS WOULD BE JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY
THE "ANTI-HEGEMONY" ISSUE, AND AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE
LARGER JAPANESE PARTICIPATION IN SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS. HE ALSO RULED OUT ANY TERRITORIAL CON-
CESSIONS WITH JAPAN. END SUMMARY.

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2. SOVIET OFFICIALS DEALING WITH CHINA HAVE
CONTINUED TO BE UNAVAILABLE, HOWEVER EMBOFF CALLED ON DR. BORIS
ZANYEGIN, SINOLOGIST WITH THE INSTITUTE OF THE USA
AND CANADA, ON JAN 8 TO DISCUSS THE CHINESE RELEASE
OF THE SOVIET HELICOPTER CREW. (THE NEWS OF CHOU
EN-LAI'S DEATH HAD NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED.) ZANYEGIN
SAID THAT THE SOVIETS WERE VERY PLEASED WITH THE
RELEASE, WHICH HAD BEEN TOTALLY UNEXPECTED. HE SAID
THAT HE CONSIDERED IT A "SIGNIFICANT GESTURE" WHICH
HE HOPED WOULD LEAD TO SOME IMPROVEMENT IN STAT-
TO-STATE RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT MOSCOW WAS STILL
UNCRETAIN HOW MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO ATTACH TO THE MOVE
AND NOTED THAT CHINESE PROPAGANDA ATTACKS ON THE
SOVIET UNION HAD CONTINUED UNABATED, WHICH TENDED
TO UNDERMINE THE IDEA THAT PEKING WAS SEEKING A
GENUINE RECONCILIATION. BUT HE SAID THAT THE TWO
THINGS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS SEPARATE BUT RELATED
DEVELOPMENTS. HE SAID THAT IN HIS PERSONAL OPINION
IT WAS "A VERY SMART MOVE," BUT THE MAIN POINT, HE
THOUGHT, WAS "TO TELL DR. KISSINGER THAT
THE DOOR BETWEEN PEKING AND MOSCOW NEED NOT ALWAYS
REMAIN SHUT." ZANYEGIN DID NOT EXTRAPOLATE FROM THIS
POINT, BUT DID INDICATE THAT HE THOUGHT PEKING'S
GESTURE WAS AIMED MORE AT WASHINGTON THAN MOSCOW.

3. ZANYEGIN SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT MOSCOW
COULD DO TO RESPOND APPROPRIATELY. HE SAID THAT
"SOME STEPS" MIGHT BE TAKEN ON MINOR PROBLEMS SUCH
AS THE BORDER NAVIGATION TALKS. ON IL'ICHEV'S
POSSIBLE RETURN TO PEKING, HE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT
PRIVY TO GOVERNMENT PLANNING, BUT HE THOUGHT IT WAS
A POSSIBILITY. HE SAID THAT THE TIMING WOULD HAVE
TO BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND
THAT SOME EXCHANGES MAY ALREADY HAVE TAKEN PLACE. ON
A POSSIBLE TIMING CONFLICT WITH THE SOVIET PARTY
CONGRESS OPENING IN LATE FEBRUARY, ZANYEGIN SAID THAT
SINCE IL'ICHEV WAS NOT A MEMBER OR ALTERNATE OF THE
CENTRAL COMMITTEE, HIS CHINA TALKS WOULD TAKE PRECE-
DENCE, ALTHOUGH THE LEADERSHIP WOULD NATURALLY PREFER
THAT IMPORTANT OFFICIALS BE IN MOSCOW WHILE THE PARTY
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CONGRESS IS GOING ON. SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO PEKING
TOLSTIKOV WAS A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE,
ZANYEGIN POINTED OUT, AND WOULD CERTAINLY RETURN FOR
THE CONGRESS. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH ZANYEGIN CLAIMED NOT
TO KNOW ABOUT PLANS FOR IL'ICHEV'S RETURN, HE IMPLIED
THAT HE CONSIDERED IT LIKELY AND PROBABLY FAIRLY
IMMINENT, TO PERMIT IL'ICHEV TO COME BACK FOR
THE CONGRESS. END COMMENT.

4. TURNING TO JAPAN, ZANYEGIN SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO WOULD HAVE TWO MAIN POINTS TO DISCUSS ON HIS CURRENT VISIT: FIRST, THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS NOT BE DIRECTED AGAINST THIRD COUNTRIES. MOSCOW IS VERY MUCH AWARE, HE STRESSED, THAT JAPAN HAS SO FAR RESISTED CHINA'S EFFORTS TO INCLUDE "ANTI-HEGEMONY" LANGUAGE IN THE PROPOSED PEACE TREATY AND THAT ITS ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH PEKING AND MOSCOW REQUIRE CAREFUL BALANCE. THE SOVIET UNION, HE CONTINUED, HAS NO OBJECTIONS TO THE FULL NORMALIZATION OF SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE TREATY, BUT WOULD STRONGLY RESENT ANY WORDING DIRECTED AT OTHERS, WHICH IT WOULD TAKE TO MEAN ITSELF. GROMYKO'S SECOND POINT, ZANYEGIN SAID, WOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE LARGER JAPANESE INVESTMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN PROJECTS TO DEVELOP SIBERIAN RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY ENERGY RESOURCES. THESE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED FOR MANY YEARS, HE SAID, BUT THE LEVEL OF JAPANESE INVOLVEMENT IS NOT ALL THAT IT COULD BE. THE VISIT ALSO MEETS THE REQUIREMENT FOR A RETURN VISIT IN THE COMMUNIQUE ON MIYAZAWA'S VISIT TO MOSCOW LAST JANUARY. BUT GROMYKO'S TRIP IS NOT MERELY FOR PROTOCOL PURPOSES, ZANYEGIN SAID.

5. ON THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE, HE SAID THAT THE JAPANESE WERE CERTAIN TO RAISE IT BUT HE FELT THAT IT WAS NOT AN URGENT ISSUE AND NO CHANGE COULD BE EXPECTED. ZANYEGIN SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT OF SEVERAL WEEKS TO JAPAN EARLIER IN 1975 HE WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THAT THE ISSUE HARDLY EVER CAME UP, AND HE MENTIONED THE COMMENT OF A JAPANESE PROFESSOR THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS SHOULD LET IT SIT AND ALLOW THE

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HEALING EFFECTS OF TIME TO SOLVE IT. ZANYEGIN SAID THAT MOSCOW COULD RETURN TO THE 1956 FORMULA OR THE IDEA PUT FORTH BY PROFESSOR HIRASAWA RECENTLY (UNDER WHICH MOSCOW WOULD RETURN THE HABOMIAS AND SHIKOTAN AND AGREE TO DISCUSS KUNASHIRI AND ETOROPU AT SOME DISTANT DATE), BUT THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SEEMED INFLEXIBLE ON THE ISSUE. ZANYEGIN AFFIRMED THAT MOSCOW WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO OFFER ANY COMPROMISE "AT THIS TIME" BECAUSE OF ITS IMPLICATIONS "ELSEWHERE." ASKED WHETHER THIS MEANT THE CHINA BORDER, HE SAID IT DID AND ADDED THAT NO TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE SHOULD BE EXPECTED THERE EITHER.

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